

**REPORT/RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
OF SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA
AND RECORD OF ACTION**

August 31, 1999

FROM: THOMAS J. PRENDERGAST, M.D.
Director of Public Health

**SUBJECT: GRANT APPLICATION FOR HEALTHY FAMILIES/MEDI-CAL OUTREACH
PROJECT**

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Approve submission of grant application in the amount of \$200,000 to the California Department of Health Services for the Healthy Families/Medi-Cal Outreach Project.
2. Authorize Director of Public Health to sign the grant application.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: The State Department of Health Services is seeking applicants to provide direct outreach and enrollment activities from September 10, 1999 – September 09, 2000, to children eligible for the Healthy Families Program (HFP) and Medi-Cal for Children (MCC) Program. The Department of Public Health has been conducting a State-funded outreach program for the Medi-Cal Program for the past seven months, utilizing seven community based organizations, and part-time bilingual employees located at social services offices. The project resulted in the submission of 4,272 Medi-Cal applications. The Department is currently reviewing the status of these applications. Of the 1,014 applications that have been reviewed, 449 individuals have been verified as enrolled in the Medi-Cal Program. The Department also initiated the development of touch screen kiosks with information on the Medi-Cal Program that will be sited at community locations. Three kiosk installations are planned for late September, 1999.

This is the second phase of the State's community-based outreach efforts. Outreach for the Healthy Families Program has been added. Funds of up to \$100,000 are available for single-agency applicants or up to \$200,000 for applications filed by a coalition of applicants. Applications from agencies are encouraged to address specific cultural or specialized language groups that have barriers to accessing information about these programs and applying. A particular concern of the State is with the "public charge issue" in which immigrants to the U.S. have historically avoided seeking Medi-Cal Program benefits for their families out of concern that the receipt of such benefits could adversely affect their current or future immigration status. The Immigration and Naturalization Service has recently issued a directive that the receipt of specific identified public-funded benefits, including the general Medi-Cal Program, would not usually be considered in immigration decisions.

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The State is seeking applications from agencies that can address the public charge issues with affected populations. As a result, the Department has partnered with a local community-based organization, the Libreria del Pueblo, to develop an application to enroll 1,000 children in the HFP/MCC. Libreria del Pueblo has a history of providing educational programs for self-sufficiency, job training programs, community development and ESL programs. If funded, the Department of Public Health would be the administrative agent for the grant, provide four Public Service Employees to provide outreach and continued assistance to applicant families, and continue the touch screen kiosk project, including adding HFP information and additional sites. The Libreria del Pueblo would conduct outreach and enrollment activities in housing projects, community centers, WIC clinics and other community locations. The existing Community Outreach Advisory Committee would continue.

REVIEW BY OTHERS: This application has been reviewed by Charles Larkin, Deputy County Counsel, on August 24, 1999.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: Approval of this application will have no financial impact.

PRESENTER: Thomas J. Prendergast, M.D.